

Social Media as Digital Marketing in the Brand Image of “Hangry” Food and Beverages

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the role of social media as a digital marketing tool in shaping and strengthening brand image in the food and beverage industry, with a case study on the brand "Hangry". The approach used is descriptive qualitative, through literature analysis and case studies related to digital branding strategies. The results of the study show that social media plays a significant role in expanding market reach, increasing brand visibility, and building emotional relationships between consumers and brands through creative content, personalized messages, and Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM). The implementation of digital marketing strategies by Hangry has successfully strengthened brand image through a combination of conventional and digital branding, creating a consistent and relevant customer experience across various platforms. Despite challenges such as global competition and brand identity consistency, strategic social media integration has proven to be able to increase customer loyalty and brand value in a competitive market.

Keywords: *Food And Beverages, Social Media, Digital Marketing, Brand Image.*

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1. | INTRODUCTION

The digital age has ushered in a transformative era for businesses worldwide, fundamentally changing the dynamics of customer interactions and reshaping the essence of brand engagement. The rise of e-commerce, social media platforms, mobile apps, and other digital technologies has empowered consumers with unprecedented access to information, choice, and influence. Consequently, the traditional paradigm of customer acquisition and retention has been disrupted, necessitating a major shift in how businesses view and nurture customer relationships. Businesses need not only to offer high-quality products or services; they must also deliver exceptional experiences that resonate with customers on a deeper level, driving loyalty, advocacy, and long-term value creation (Sasmita et al., 2024).

Customers are increasingly turning to the internet to meet their shopping needs. International dynamics, advanced infrastructure, consumer lifestyles, and the proliferation of information, communication, and technology are driving this behavior. These factors have increased consumer demand for the latest trends and improved socially acceptable living conditions. A crucial aspect of online shopping is enhancing customer experience through product and service comparisons (Sivansen, 2017). A company's brand is its intangible asset (Paulus, 2018). Recent advancements in branding focus on examining the emotional component of branding. Customers' impressions after interacting with products, services, and businesses, and forming perceptions based on sensory data, are referred to as online customer experience (Anshu et al., 2022). It is crucial for delivering customer satisfaction, creating expectations, gaining trust and confidence, retaining loyal customers, and forming effective bonds (Slack and Singh, 2020). Experience is a broad term used in various topics and learning environments. Academics and professionals are interested in this topic; however, researchers argue that research remains limited and fragmented (Bilgihan et al., 2016).

In the ever-evolving digital era, understanding effective branding strategies through the use of digital technology has become crucial. As explained by, "Digital marketing is not only changing the way products are promoted, but also how brands can engage directly with consumers" (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Digital branding aims not only to increase brand awareness but also to build closer relationships with consumers through direct engagement on digital platforms. This strategy is becoming increasingly important amidst increasingly competitive competition, where differentiation is one of the main keys to success (Santiko & Albana, 2023). For example, micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) have utilized digital branding to increase competitiveness and build consumer trust in their products (Erie et al., 2024).

Creative content plays a crucial role in business because it can provide numerous benefits to a brand or business. Demonstrating how to create creative content that can be published on social media yielded results that demonstrated significant changes after the demonstration (Novita, 2023). Digital Optimization in Marketing Management highlights the importance of market analysis, SEO optimization, and the use of social

media to expand marketing reach and strengthen a brand's presence in the digital world. Technological transformation helps companies improve the efficiency of their branding strategies (Widya Nengsih, 2024).

2. | RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach, aiming to explore in-depth the digital branding strategies implemented by companies to enhance their image in the digital era. The qualitative approach allows for a more in-depth analysis of non-numerical data, such as interviews, case studies, and literature, relevant to understanding the digital branding phenomenon (Sugiyono, 2022).

3. | RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Marketing Strategy

A business strategy is an action plan developed by a company to achieve long-term goals and improve business performance. Business strategy encompasses various aspects such as market analysis, product development, resource management, and marketing. The following are several business strategies that companies can implement, according to Eric Ries (2017); Michael E. Porter (1998) in (Mariani Alimuddin, 2023).

Product branding strategies often involve leveraging social media, content marketing, SEO, and other technologies to effectively reach and engage with consumers. As explained by Keller (2013), leveraging digital technology in branding strategies allows brands to "build deeper, more personal relationships with their consumers, ultimately increasing brand loyalty and value" (2013). Marketing strategy implementation encompasses a series of concrete steps taken by an organization to implement a marketing plan and achieve its business goals. It involves detailed actions and resource management to ensure that marketing strategies are designed and executed effectively, Philip Kotler & Kevin Lane Keller, 2019 (2024).

Marketing is a business discipline that aims to identify, predict, and satisfy consumer needs profitably. It encompasses various strategies and techniques used to attract and retain customers through the creation and delivery of value. Robert Cialdini, a leading social psychologist and author of *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*, explains that persuasion in marketing relies on psychological principles to influence purchasing decisions. He emphasizes that "effective marketing often utilizes principles such as reciprocity and social consistency to shape preferences and purchase actions" (Cialdini, 1984), helping marketers design campaigns that are not only informative but also persuasive.

The use of social media as a digital branding tool by PT Rinjani Royal Cosmetindo Lombok has successfully enhanced brand visibility and built strong relationships with consumers. By utilizing platforms such as Instagram and TikTok, the company showcases creative and relevant content, including beauty tutorials and story-based campaigns. This approach strengthens the brand's identity while expanding market reach, particularly among young, digitally active audiences.

Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) plays a crucial role in shaping the company's brand image. Satisfied customers frequently share positive reviews on social media and e-commerce platforms, creating a domino effect that increases the trust of potential buyers. Since personal recommendations are often perceived as more credible than traditional advertising, E-WOM becomes an effective marketing tool that helps the company strengthen its brand reputation in a competitive market.

Content personalization also serves as a key strategy for capturing audience attention and boosting customer engagement. By tailoring marketing messages and materials based on consumer demographics, preferences, and behavior, the company provides more relevant and personalized experiences for each segment. This enhances emotional connection, strengthens brand loyalty, and ensures that marketing messages are effectively delivered through the most suitable digital platforms.

Despite these advantages, implementing digital branding presents several challenges. The company faces intense competition from global brands with greater resources, along with the need to adapt to constantly shifting marketing trends. Maintaining consistent brand identity across various digital platforms is also demanding, especially when messages must be tailored to different audience groups. Additionally, reliance on technology requires stronger digital infrastructure, while managing real-time interactions with consumers calls for significant resource allocation.

To address these challenges, integrating digital branding with conventional branding becomes an effective approach. By combining social media activities and digital campaigns with offline efforts such as product exhibitions and local collaborations, PT Rinjani Royal Cosmetindo Lombok is able to reach diverse audience segments. This integrated strategy ensures consistency in brand messaging across digital and traditional channels, creating a unified customer experience and reinforcing a positive brand impression in an increasingly competitive market.

Brand Image

A brand is more than just a name or logo; it encompasses the entire identity and perception associated with a product, service, or company. Branding aims to create a positive image in the minds of consumers, differentiate a product from competitors, and build an emotional connection with customers. Brand value is the extent to which a brand can influence consumer preferences and decisions. Product branding is a strategic process that involves creating a unique identity for a product that differentiates it from competitors and fosters consumer loyalty. This process includes developing visual elements such as logos and packaging, as well as communicating relevant and emotionally appealing values to the target audience. The ultimate goal of branding is to create a strong, positive perception in the minds of consumers, which directly influences their purchasing decisions.

Customer Experience

Customer experience plays a crucial and fundamental role in building and strengthening brand image in the food and beverage (F&B) industry. In a sector where choices are abundant, the experience extends far beyond the taste of the food or drink it encompasses the customer's entire interaction with the brand. For Hangry, customer experience becomes a core element in shaping how the brand is perceived.

Customer experience forms brand perception and reputation, as every interaction—from searching for information online to finishing a visit shapes how customers view the brand. Positive experiences create the perception that the brand is trustworthy, high-quality, and value-driven, which ultimately enhances the overall brand image. Conversely, negative experiences can quickly harm a brand's reputation, especially in an era where online reviews and word of mouth spread rapidly.

A strong customer experience also drives loyalty and repeat purchases. When customers feel satisfied, they are more likely to return, make repeat purchases, and recommend the brand to others. This naturally strengthens the brand image over time. In addition, customer experience serves as a powerful differentiator in a competitive F&B market where many products are similar. Elements such as staff friendliness, store ambiance, and service efficiency play a major role in creating a unique brand identity.

Consistency in delivering satisfying experiences builds customer trust. When customers feel appreciated and believe that their needs are met, their emotional bond with the brand grows stronger. This trust becomes an essential asset in long-term brand building. A positive brand image shaped by good experiences also influences purchasing decisions, as consumers tend to choose brands associated with comfort, satisfaction, and reliability.

In summary, customer experience at Hangry acts as the main driver of its brand image. A well-crafted and consistent experience has the power to transform casual customers into loyal brand advocates, helping to build a strong, positive, and sustainable brand image.

Digital Marketing

Digital marketing is a collection of marketing activities that utilize digital platforms or the internet to achieve business goals. It encompasses various strategies and tools such as search engine optimization (SEO), pay-per-click (PPC) advertising, social media marketing, email marketing, content marketing, mobile marketing, and others (N. Fatma et al., 2023). The primary goal of digital marketing is to expand brand visibility, generate leads, increase sales, strengthen customer loyalty, and improve customer relationships. Digital marketing provides businesses with the opportunity to achieve their goals more effectively and efficiently in the ever-evolving digital and mobile era. Digital marketing is a marketing approach that utilizes digital platforms and technologies to promote products and brands. Through digital marketing, companies can reach a larger audience more cost-effectively compared to traditional marketing methods. Digital marketing plays a critical role in product branding by enabling

companies to more efficiently and effectively reach and engage with their customers. Digital technology offers opportunities for increased visibility, more personalized interactions, and in-depth analytics, all of which contribute to building a strong brand.

Established in 2019, Hangry is here to answer your "what do you want to eat?" questions by building a multi-brand fast food restaurant that sells a variety of local and international culinary delights. As of March 2022, we have 5 brands with an average rating of 4.8/5 across various online messaging platforms and over 70 outlets across Greater Jakarta, Bandung, Semarang, and Surabaya. To be part of the daily life of the global community. Mission. Bringing joy to every moment of people's eating and drinking. Hangry is home to 16 leading culinary brands.

Through 112 outlets spread across various regions, our products have been enjoyed by tens of millions of people with a total of tens of thousands of orders every day. Hangry brands include: Moon Chicken, San Gyu, Kopi Dari Pada, Ayam Koplo, Bu Tambar, Hot Side Story, Accha, Uno Chicken, Barendang, Bacem Tresno, Mak Dura, Habibi, Bli Agung, Bawang Putri, Bishi Bento, TerSerah.

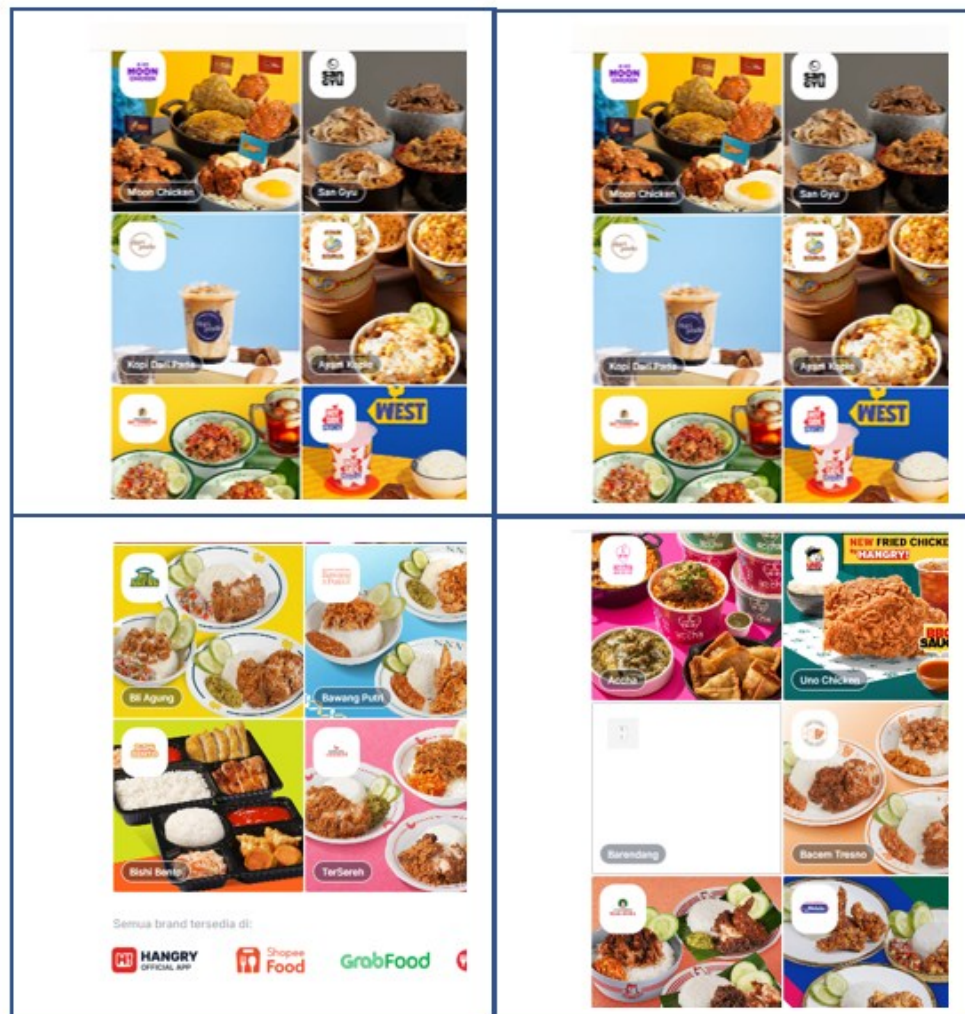


Figure 1. Hangry Products

4. | CONCLUSION

Social media plays a crucial role as a digital marketing tool in building and strengthening the brand image of food and beverage (F&B) products quickly, efficiently, and interactively. Social media allows F&B brands to reach a very wide audience without intermediaries, directly to their target market. Brands can use social media to project a unique and memorable persona, making the audience feel connected and understand the brand's values. The F&B industry relies heavily on visual appeal. Social media, especially platforms like Instagram and TikTok, is an ideal platform for showcasing high-quality, mouth-watering photos and videos of food and drinks. Consumers, especially Gen Z, often seek information and read reviews from other customers on social media before making a purchase. Social media provides analytics features that enable businesses to effectively monitor and evaluate the performance of their marketing campaigns, understanding what is working and what needs improvement. Overall, the implementation of digital marketing strategies by Hangry has successfully strengthened brand image through a combination of conventional and digital branding, creating a consistent and relevant customer experience across various platforms. Despite challenges such as global competition and brand identity consistency, strategic social media integration has proven to be able to increase customer loyalty and brand value in a competitive market.

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The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Ethical Approval and Originality Statement

Ethical approval was obtained for this study. The manuscript represents original work and has not been previously published, nor is it under consideration by another journal.

Data Disclosure Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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